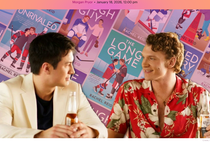
'Heated Rivalry': Your Guide to All the Couples in the Game Changers Book Universe

Morgan Rust • January 8, 2026, 12:00 pm



Now that we're in the *Heated Rivalry* off-season, you may be thinking, "What am I going to do with myself until hockey romance returns for Season 2?" Watching Season 1 for the umpteenth time is certainly an option, but there are also other whole books you can dive into. We highly recommend Rachel Reid's Game Changers series, which the show is based on, but if you haven't gotten around to reading it yet, Swooon can help you fill in the gaps.

Reid's universe includes five couples. We already know two of them, obviously, Finn and Ilya, Kyle and Eric, Shane (Hudson Williams) and Ilya (Connor Storrie), and Scott and Kip (Robert Hunter). Spoiler alert: *Heated Rivalry* ended on a cliffhanger with Tierney already Rimmed Shane and Scott and Kip in the middle of the show, but that's not to say the other couples won't come into the picture, it is here [Franzia Around] and Sip [Robbie Q.K.], [Season 3's "Shane" episode covers most of Reid's first book, Game Changer.]

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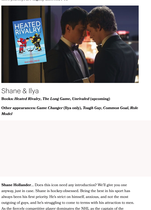
That leaves three more romances for the show to cover. Tierney toured the arrival of one of them in the upcoming second season, so we thought we'd lay out those who haven't read Reid's other books. Scroll for everything you need to know about the key players in the Game Changers series, including those who have been cast and those who are still pending. Tell us your favorite non-Hallmark pairing in the comments at the end of the page!

***Heated Rivalry*, Seasons 1, Streaming Now, Crave & HBO Max**

***Heated Rivalry*, Seasons 2, TBA, Crave & HBO Max**



Scott & Kip

Book: *Game Changer*

Other appearances *Heated Rivalry* **(Scott only),** *Common Goal*, *Rule Model*, *The Long Game*

Scott Hunter we've mentioned, is someone who viewers have already become acquainted with. In both the book and show, Scott is the 20-year-old captain of the New York Admirals hockey team, a position that he takes seriously. Scott's parents died when he was a child, and he's had to work for everything he has. As a result, he holds himself to a strict standard and always puts his team first — and he wears Kip. Scott has decided to keep his sexuality a secret while he plays in the NHL, so he's never been in love before Kip.

Kip Grady is a 25-year-old amateur hockey referee for sports Scott. He quickly gets to know Scott, and he's the only person he's ever been with, aside from his male friends. He's aiming to get a job at a literary museum where he meet him in Game Changer. With a crew of close and supportive friends and family, he and Scott come from entirely different worlds, but they're instantly drawn to each other when Scott becomes a regular at the smoothie shop. After they fall hard and fast, Kip has to decide if their relationship is worth being kept a secret.

Click here for a spoiler-free summary of *Game Changer*. Scott and Kip's book and show journeys are slightly different, FYI.

Shane & Ilya

Books *Heated Rivalry*, *The Long Game*, *Unrivaled* (upcoming)

Other appearances *Game Changer* **(Ilya only),** *Tough Guy*, *Common Goal*, *Rule Model*

Shane Hollander – Dare this icon novel any introductions? We'll give you one anyway, just in case. Shane is hockey obsessed. Being the best in his sport has always been his first priority. He's strict on himself, anxious, and not the most outgoing of guys, and he's struggling to come to terms with his attraction to men. As the fiercely competitive player dominates the NHL, so the captain of the Montreal Metropolitans has to deal with the unfinished of a secret life's been holding up with his rival since his rookie season.

Ilya Rozanov the man, the myth, the legend. Russian hockey star and Shane roster the thief at the same time, but they couldn't be more different. Ilya's confident, loud, and cool without trying, making a reputation as an obnoxious yet charming playboy. Ilya's sexuality is never hidden, but he's confident in himself. He's realized to go for what he wants, including Ilya. Fabian hates hockey — his parents boarded hockey players in his house when he was a teenager. Fabian's parents have never outright rejected him, but they aren't totally supportive of him, either.

Ryan Price is one of those hockey players who lived in Fabian's house back in the day. As a teenager G??, Ryan's an NHL enforcer who's been traded numerous times. But as intimidating as he is on the ice, Ryan is deeply anxious and insecure. He's out as gay to his teammates and doesn't actively hide it from the public. Ryan's traded to Toronto, where he's reunited with Fabian after having a crush on him when they were kids. As Fabian introduces Ryan to the gay scene and brings new joy into his life, Ryan questions whether or not he's happy in the NHL.

Fabian & Ryan

Book: *Tough Guy*

Other appearances *Heated Rivalry* **(Ryan only),** *Rule Model* **(Ryan only),** *The Long Game*

On-the-rise musician **Fabian Salah** knows exactly who he is. He's a former presenting, out gay man, active in the Toronto LGBTQ+ scene, and he's got a solid friend group. He's a bartender at a popular gay bar, and he's hoping to get a job working as a drag queen in the meantime, but he's confident in himself. He's realized to go for what he wants, including Ryan. Fabian hates hockey — his parents boarded hockey players in his house when he was a teenager. Fabian's parents have never outright rejected him, but they aren't totally supportive of him, either.

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Kyle & Eric

Book: *Common Goal*

Other appearances *Game Changer*, *Rule Model*

Kyle Smith is played by Matthew Fraksa in the show. That's right. The bartender from Episode 3 has his own story! Kyle doubles as a grad student and employee at the Kingsbriar Inn where Kip and all of his friends hang out. Speaking of Kyle has a major crush on Kip, though he knows it's hopeless once Scott comes into the picture. Like Kip, Kyle is seriously smart when it comes to art and history. He's mature and self-assured, though he was forced to grow up too fast. When he was a kid, his parents kicked him out of the house for being gay, but he reconnected with his entire team and drove a wedge between him and his parents. He's never off-duty mes... until he meets Eric.

Eric Bennett, the 41-year-old goaltender for the New York Admirals, is on the verge of a major life change. Not only has he just discovered his wife, he's also considering retiring from the NHL. He's a Harvard grad with a passion for art, and his reserved, elegant personality makes him stand apart from most of his teammates. Eric wants to explore his bisexuality by dating men for the first time, and he's drawn to the experienced Kyle concierge. After they come public at the Kingsbriar Eric and Kyle become friends, later falling into a friends-with-benefits arrangement.

Troy & Harris

Book: *Rule Model*

Other appearances *Tough Guy* **(Troy only),** *The Long Game*

Troy Barrett is the newest addition to the Ottawa Centurions, joining shortly after Ilya does. Troy comes from the Toronto Guardians, where he was best friends with the star player and biggest bully in the league, Dylan Kent. When Kent is accused of sexual assault, Troy publicly calls him out, which leads to the team getting rid of him. Once Troy goes to Ottawa, he's luck turns. He's also dealing with a messy breakup from his secret boyfriend, as the retrograde winger has walk up when he starts Hinnach trouble come. Troy's new teammates inspire him to actively be a better and more open person — as does Hinnach bubbly social media manager.

Harris Dentner — you guessed it — is said bubbly social media manager. He's pretty much everyone's best friend, and he's the Ottawa Centurions' PR rep, so he's everyone on the team, and always has a smile on his face. Harris was also born with a heart defect, which has resulted in multiple surgeries throughout his life, but don't mistake him for fragile. The perceptive Harris immediately picks up on the fact that Troy is struggling, so he offers his support and friendship as the player adjusts to his new surroundings.

Filed Under: Books, TV
Tags: Connor Storrie, Hudson Williams
Books: Common Goal, Game Changer, Heated Rivalry, Rule Model, The Long Game, Tough Guy
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